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ABSTRACT

The movement of the black population from rural to urban areas increased the potential for integration by ending the isolation of blacks on farms in the rural South. But that isolation has been replaced by a new form of segregation. Black metropolitan growth has been concentrated in the central cities accommodated by the expansion of urban ghettos rather than by the development of racially integrated neighborhoods. The most immediate effect of segregation is found in the cost and quality of housing available to blacks. In addition, segregated housing gives rise to segregated schools which appear to have a negative impact on the scholastic achievement of blacks. Other effects include the lack of employment opportunities and a rise in prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory actions. Governmental attempts to deal with the problem have not been effective due, in some part, to racial differences in income, information barriers, and particularly to prejudicial attitudes on the parts of both blacks and whites. (Author/EB)

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THE PERSISTENCE OF RACIAL SEGREGATION IN HOUSING

ANN BURNET SCHNARE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD vii

NATION'S BLACKS—FROM RURAL TO URBAN . 1
- The Black Exodus from the South 1
- Black Growth in Metropolitan Areas 2

PATTERNS OF SEGREGATION IN URBAN AREAS 7
- The Concentration of Blacks in the Cities 7
- Neighborhood Segregation 9

THE COSTS OF SEGREGATION 15
- The Dual Housing Market 15
  - The Price of Ghetto Housing 15
  - The Quality of Housing Services 16
- Educational Deprivation 16
- Employment Opportunities 17
- Psychological Effects 17
- Benefits versus Costs 18

THE CAUSES OF SEGREGATION 19
- Discrimination 19
- Economic Factors 20
- Prejudicial Attitudes 24
  - Black Attitudes toward Integration 24
  - White Attitudes toward Integration 24
- Informational Barriers 26

TOWARD A NEW PUBLIC POLICY FOR DEALING WITH SEGREGATION 27

REFERENCES 29

FIGURES

1. Distribution of Blacks by Region: 1900–1974 2
2. Net Outmigration of Blacks from the South: 1900–1975; and Net Inmigration 3
3. Percent of Blacks and Whites in Metropolitan Areas: 1900–1975 4
4. Percent of Blacks and Whites in Metropolitan Areas Living in Central Cities: 1900–1975 8
5. Proportion of Urban Blacks Living in Census Tracts with Different Racial Mixes: 1960 and 1970 10
6. Proportion of Urban Whites Living in Census Tracts with Different Racial Mixes: 1960 and 1970 11
7. A Hypothetical Pattern of Ghetto Growth 12
8. Actual and Predicted Distribution of Urban Blacks by Proportion Black in Tract: 1970 22
9. Actual and Predicted Distribution of Urban Whites by Proportion Black in Tract: 1970 23

FOREWORD

The 1960s ushered in a series of social, political, and economic developments that might have dramatically improved the prospects for neighborhood racial mixing. Fair housing laws were enacted at all levels of government, blacks made rapid gains in income and education, and the attitudes of blacks and whites alike grew increasingly favorable toward integration.

These developments could have produced a significant decline in the segregation of urban blacks. But existing data indicate that the opposite change occurred. In 1970, metropolitan blacks were more segregated from whites than they had been in 1960, and the experience of the 1970s shows little evidence that this trend has been reversed.

The persistence of housing segregation contrasts with the increase in integration that has occurred in other facets of life. Segregation has disappeared from restaurants, hotels, and other public places. Blacks have entered types of employment and are making inroads into levels of employment formerly closed to them. Newspapers, television, and other media have made strides in breaking away from demeaning stereotypes. But in the midst of these changes, segregation in private housing stands out as a seemingly unyielding obstacle to a more integrated society.

While much remains to be learned about the causes and consequences of housing segregation, it undoubtedly underlies a host of economic and social problems that currently plague American society. The furor over school busing, for example, would largely evaporate if there were no separate black and white housing markets. White flight to the suburbs, the fiscal decline of many central cities, and problems with quality public education are more complex phenomena, but it appears questionable that successful solutions can be fashioned for them that do not encompass steps toward more integrated communities. Difficulties in understanding and dealing with such problems highlight the importance of housing segregation.

William Gorham, *President*
The Urban Institute

Washington, D.C.

NATION'S BLACKS—
FROM RURAL TO URBAN

There are currently about 24 million blacks in the United States, representing some 11 percent of the overall population. About half of these blacks are found in the nation's South. Three-fourths reside in metropolitan areas, and about three-fifths in central cities.

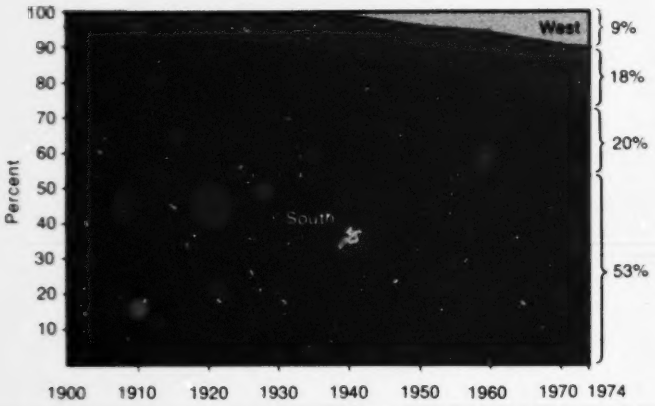
The location of blacks today contrasts sharply with the geographic distribution at the beginning of the twentieth century when three-fourths of the nation's blacks lived in the rural South. The subsequent 75 years have witnessed a fundamental shift in the white and black populations among northern, southern, and western states, between rural and urban areas, and between cities and suburban rings. While these shifts have effectively ended the isolation of blacks on the farm, a new form of isolation has appeared: racially separate neighborhoods.

The Black Exodus from the South

Between 1900 and 1974, the proportion of blacks living in the South declined from 90 to 53 percent (Figure 1). This resulted primarily from a massive exodus of blacks from the rural South to the urban North. While that exodus had been anticipated since the close of the Civil War, it did not take hold until the onset of World War I, when vast numbers of young, relatively unskilled blacks began to leave their agrarian environment to obtain jobs in the industrial North (Figure 2).

This stream of migrants increased in magnitude in the following decade, rapidly becoming one of the most pronounced in the country's history. Between 1920 and 1930, migration increased the size of the North's black population by 58 percent. Net outmigration from the South was in excess of 900,000, with one state—Georgia—losing about a fifth of its black population. While the movement of blacks from southern states subsided in the depression years, it returned to record levels with the outbreak of World War II, and extended to the West. Between 1940 and 1970, the

Figure 1
DISTRIBUTION OF BLACKS BY REGION, 1900-1974



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Trends in the United States: 1900-1969*, Technical Paper No. 10 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Social and Economic Status of Negroes in the United States, 1970*, Current Population Reports, Series P-23, no. 38 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States, 1974*, Current Population Reports, Special Studies, Series P-23, no. 54 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975).

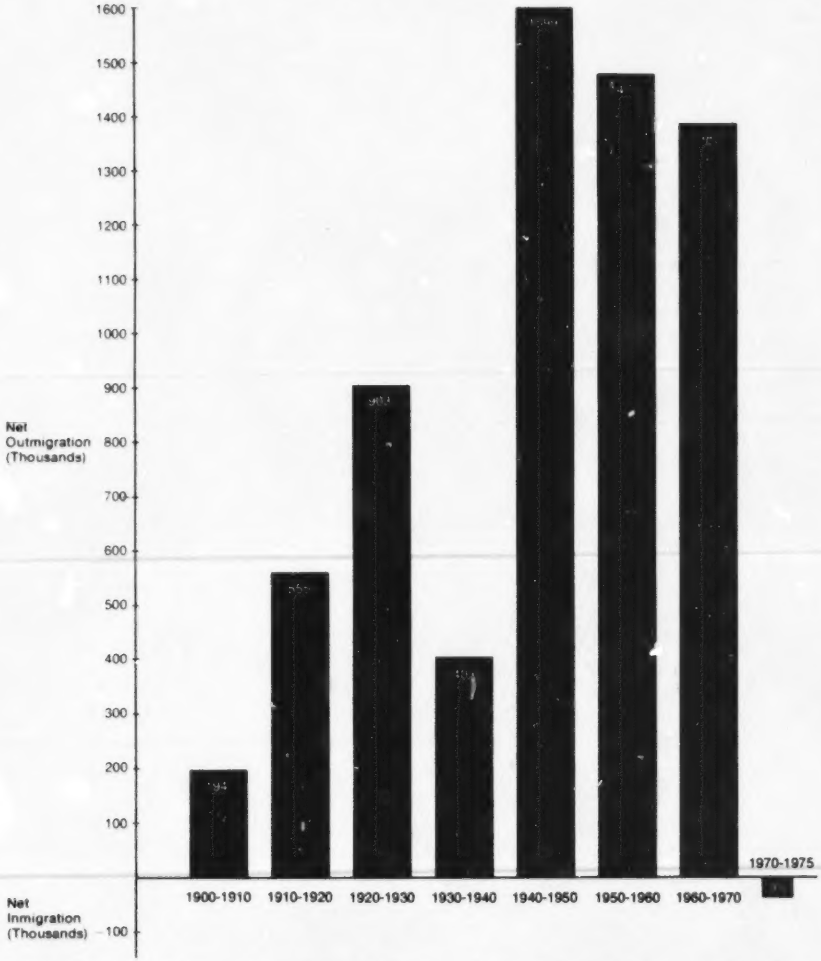
South lost an additional 4.4 million blacks through outmigration.

In the early 1970s, however, the migrational stream reversed. Between 1970 and 1974, the South gained 35,000 blacks through inmigration, while the North lost 158,000 blacks to southern and western states. The flow of blacks between regions now resembles the flow of whites, away from the older industrial cities of the North and into the newer areas of the South and the West.

Black Growth in Metropolitan Areas

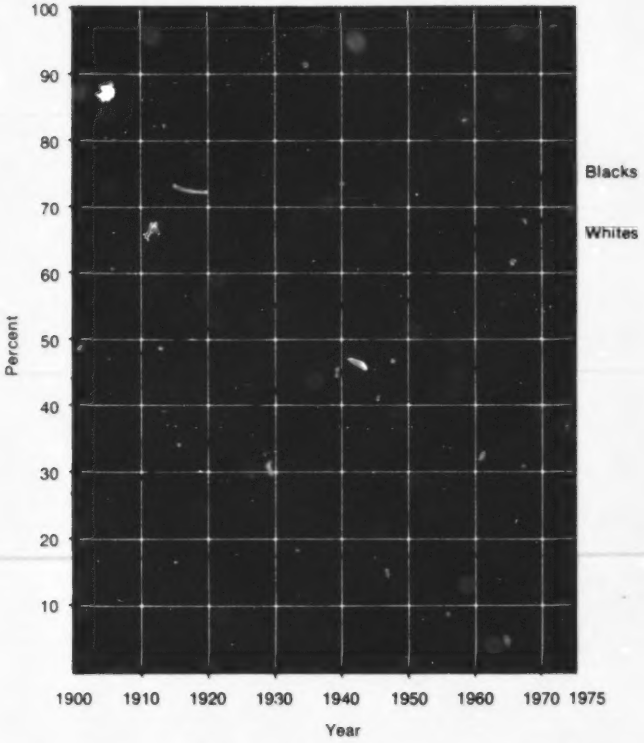
The migration of blacks from the South was accompanied by a general move to metropolitan areas. In 1900, 73 percent of the nation's blacks and 56 percent of its whites lived in nonmetropolitan areas (Figure 3). Although both the black and white populations of metropolitan areas have risen

Figure 2
NET OUTMIGRATION OF BLACKS FROM THE SOUTH, 1900-1977; AND NET INMIGRATION



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States, 1974*, Current Population Reports, Special Studies, Series P-23, no. 54 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Preliminary Intercensal Estimates of States and Components of Population Change, 1960-1970*, Current Population Reports, Series P-25, no. 460 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971); H. T. Eldridge and D. S. Thomas, "Demographic Analysis and Interrelations," in *Population Redistribution and Economic Growth: United States 1870-1950*, pt. 3 (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1964).

Figure 3
PERCENT OF BLACKS AND WHITES IN METROPOLITAN AREAS: 1900-1975



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Social and Economic Status of Negroes in the United States, 1970,* Current Population Reports, Series P-23, no. 38 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Profile of the United States: 1976,* Current Population Reports, Series P-20, no. 307 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *People of the U.S. in the 20th Century,* by I. B. Taeuber and C. Taeuber (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971).

steadily since that time, the rate of black metropolitan growth has been more dramatic. In many urban areas, black populations doubled in a single decade. In New York City, for example, the number of blacks increased from 61,000 in 1900 to 328,000 by 1930 and to 1.9 million by 1970.

Today, only about a fourth of all blacks live outside metropolitan areas, compared to a third of all whites. While the rate of black metropolitan growth has declined from about 2.8 percent per year in the 1960s to about 2.2 percent per year in the 1970s, it continues to exceed the rate of black growth in nonmetropolitan areas (about 0.1 percent per year). This contrasts with the recent reversal of trends among whites, whose rate of growth is now higher in non-metropolitan areas of the country.

PATTERNS OF SEGREGATION IN URBAN AREAS

The movement of the black population from agrarian to urban areas increased the potential for integration by ending the isolation of blacks on farms in the rural South. But that isolation has been replaced by a new form of separation. Black metropolitan growth has been concentrated in the central cities, and even within the nation's cities, black growth has been accommodated by the expansion of urban ghettos, rather than by the development of racially integrated neighborhoods.

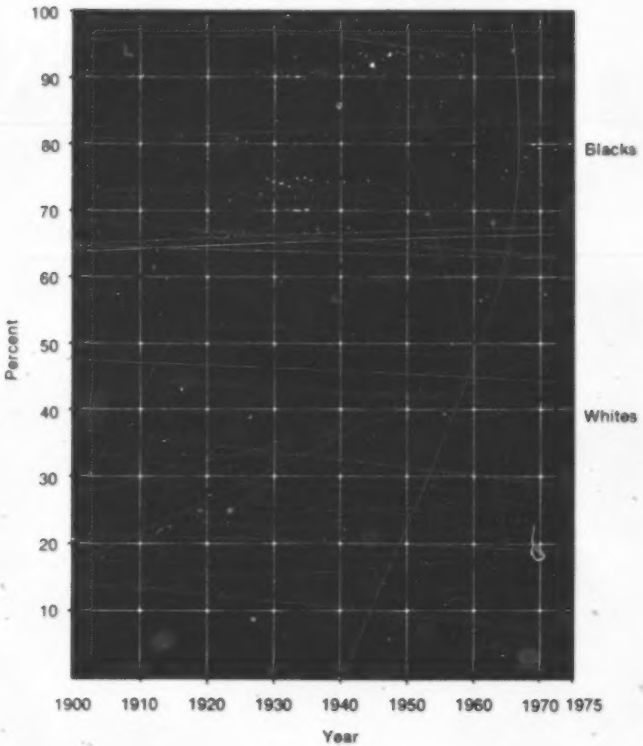
The Concentration of Blacks in the Cities

Figure 4 shows the distribution of urban blacks and whites between the cities and their suburban rings. In 1974, 78 percent of all blacks living in metropolitan areas resided in central cities—a figure approximately twice as high as the comparable rate for whites. The pattern holds true in each of the four regions of the country. Blacks are consistently overrepresented in the central cities and underrepresented in the suburbs.

Figure 4 also shows the extent to which the centralization of blacks relative to whites has increased in recent years. Between 1940 and 1974, the distribution of blacks between cities and suburbs stayed fairly constant. However, the proportion of whites who lived in the central city declined from 62 to 38 percent—a reflection of the sustained growth of predominantly white suburban areas. As a consequence, between 1940 and 1974 the black population of central cities increased from 10 to 22 percent, while in the suburbs the blacks continued to account for only about 5 percent of the population.

Since 1970, the rate of black growth within the suburbs appears to have accelerated from about 1.8 percent per year to 4.4 percent. However, this increase is in part an artifact of the small initial base. Between 1970 and 1975, the suburbs gained about 5 million whites and only 550,000 blacks. Among central-city whites who changed residences within

Figure 4
PERCENT OF BLACKS AND WHITES IN METROPOLITAN AREAS LIVING IN CENTRAL CITIES: 1900-1975



SOURCES: U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Social and Economic Status of Negroes in the United States, 1970*, Current Population Reports, Series P-23, no. 38 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1971); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States, 1974*, Current Population Reports, Special Studies, Series P-23, no. 54 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975); U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Standard Metropolitan Areas*, Selected Area Reports, Final Report PC(3)-ID (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963).

this period, about 35 percent moved from the city to the suburbs; the comparable figure for blacks was only about 10 percent. These relative rates of black and white suburbanization are very similar to the ones that were observed between 1965 and 1970, when about 32 percent of the whites who moved went to the suburbs, compared to 8 percent of the blacks. Black suburbanization thus remains a relatively minor migrational flow.

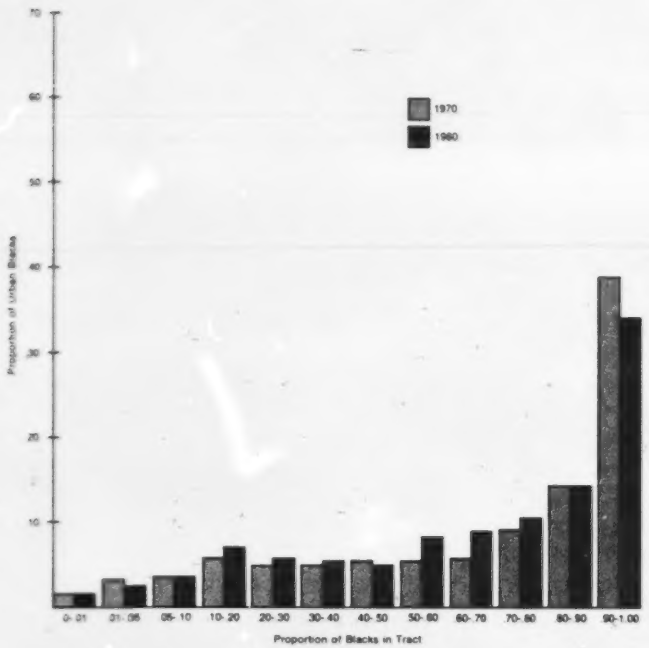
Neighborhood Segregation

Statistics showing composite city or suburban trends do not reveal the extent to which the population within those areas live in integrated or segregated neighborhoods. The extent of neighborhood segregation is revealed in Figures 5 and 6, which depict the proportion of urban blacks and whites who lived in census tracts with different racial mixes. (Census tracts are small geographic areas that house an average of 4,000 residents). Each graph compares the distribution in 1970 with the distribution in 1960. The statistics are for the 130 SMSAs (Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas) that existed and were fully tracted in both 1960 and 1970. In 1970, these areas housed some 86 percent of all metropolitan blacks.

The patterns in Figures 5 and 6, developed from the author's analysis of census tract data [25], show that metropolitan areas are highly segregated. Most observers would probably agree that a reasonable degree of *integration* occurs when the blacks in a census tract constitute anywhere from 6 percent to 30 percent of the total population. How many Americans from the large sample lived in such integrated neighborhoods in 1970? According to the author's analysis, only 12 percent of the whites and 14 percent of the blacks resided in integrated tracts. The proportion of Americans residing in highly segregated neighborhoods was, on the other hand, very high. Sixty-five percent of the whites lived in tracts where the black population was less than 1 percent. Thirty-nine percent of black Americans lived in tracts that were over 90 percent black, and 72 percent lived in tracts that were more than 50 percent black.

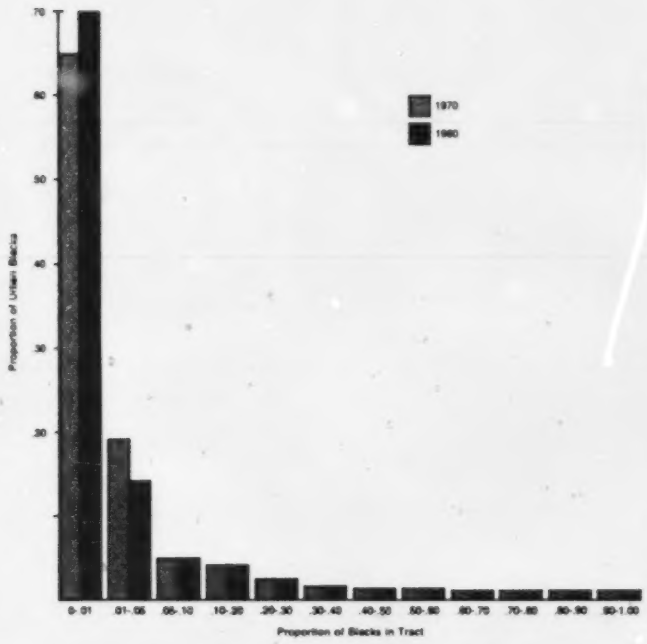
Figure 5 also reveals a significant rise in the concentration of this country's blacks in predominantly black census tracts. Between 1960 and 1970, for example, the proportion of blacks who lived in tracts that were over 90 percent black increased from 33 to 39 percent. As a result, the proportion

Figure 5
PROPORTION OF URBAN BLACKS LIVING IN CENSUS TRACTS WITH DIFFERENT RACIAL MIXES: 1960 AND 1970 (130 SMSAS)



SOURCE: A. B. Schhare, "Housing in Black and White: An Analysis of Segregation in U.S. Metropolitan Areas." Contract Report 246-3. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1977).

Figure 6
PROPORTION OF URBAN WHITES LIVING IN CENSUS TRACTS WITH DIFFERENT RACIAL MIXES: 1960 AND 1970 (130 SMSAS)



SOURCE: A. B. Schnare, "Housing in Black and White: An Analysis of Segregation in U.S. Metropolitan Areas." Contract Report 246-3. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1977).

of whites in the average black person's neighborhood decreased from 33 to 30 percent.

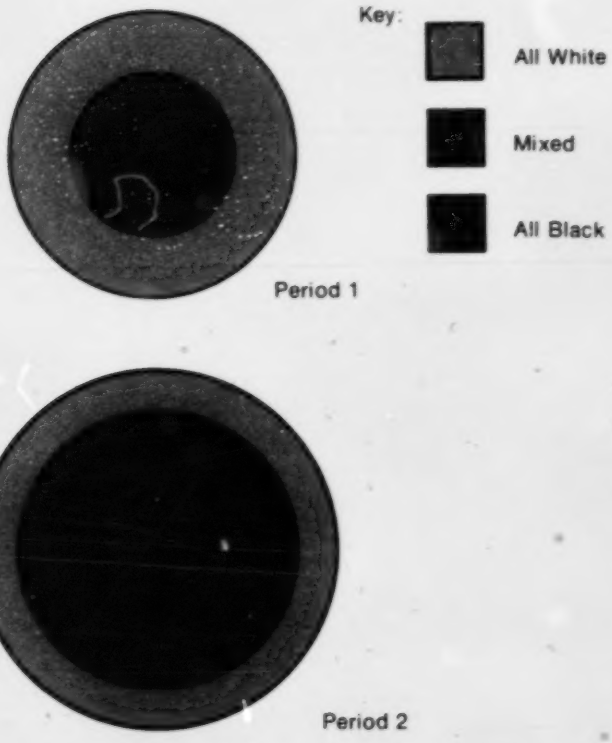
In contrast, the proportion of blacks in the average white person's neighborhood increased from 4.2 to 4.5 percent. Thus, although the average black experienced an increase in segregation, the average white lived in a tract with a slightly higher proportion of blacks.

These seemingly conflicting trends primarily reflect the peripheral expansion of established minority neighborhoods. To illustrate this point, consider the hypothetical city depicted in Figure 7. The city contains a predominantly black ghetto, surrounded by an integrated border or transitional zone. As the ghetto expands outward, the proportion of the city's black population living at the ghetto's edge will tend to decline over time. The reason is geometric: the periphery of a circle increases less rapidly than its area. The observed decline in the number of whites in the average black's census tract is thus consistent with the continued growth of the black population under segregated residential patterns.

This same reasoning can explain the concurrent experience of whites. During the 1960s, black population growth exceeded white population growth in the majority of metropolitan areas. As a result, expanding border areas of mixed races tended to grow large relative to white sectors of the metropolis. This general relationship can be visualized in Figure 7 by comparing the distribution of the city's whites in periods 1 and 2. In period 2, proportionately more whites live at the ghetto's edge.

Notwithstanding the slight increase in integration for the average white, the average black experienced greater segregation. And the majority of Americans, black and white, clearly continue to live in neighborhoods that are distinctly stratified by race. The tendency for dispersion of black households is slight. The data also suggest that, barring some change in established racial patterns, the concentration of urban blacks will become more pronounced as the metropolitan black population grows. In short, segregation will remain a fact of life for many years to come unless there is a dramatic shift in the causes underlying these settlement patterns.

Figure 7
A HYPOTHETICAL PATTERN OF GHETTO GROWTH



SOURCE: A. B. Schnare, "Housing in Black and White: An Analysis of Segregation in U.S. Metropolitan Areas." Contract Report 246-3. Washington, D.C.: Urban Institute, 1977.

THE COSTS OF SEGREGATION

If the welfare of blacks and whites were unaffected by the racial stratification of housing markets, the existence of segregation—now or in the future—would not necessarily constitute a problem. Why, then, is segregation a matter of public concern?

It is useful at this point to distinguish between prejudice, discrimination, and segregation. Prejudice refers to mind sets or attitudes. Discrimination refers to actual deeds, including public actions and policies. Housing segregation is a spatial concept that involves a clustering rather than an even distribution of blacks and whites. The three phenomena are not synonymous and the existence of one does not necessarily imply the existence of the others. For example, segregation, if it is purely voluntary, may occur where there is no discrimination, or segregation may persist for historical reasons when there is no longer prejudice. But more typically, prejudice gives rise to discrimination and both tend to generate segregated housing markets.

If it is difficult to isolate the separate impacts of these phenomena, there is considerable empirical evidence regarding their combined effects. When segregation is supported by prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory practices, it tends to preserve the economic and social disparities between blacks and whites that have existed throughout this country's history. Nobody concerned about the well-being of American blacks can ignore the segregation issue.

The Dual Housing Market

The most immediate effect of segregation is found in the cost and quality of housing available to blacks. In many urban areas, intense racial segregation has created a dual housing market—one market for whites and one market for blacks. Systematic differences in the demand for and supply of dwellings within these essentially separate sectors have almost always worked to the distinct disadvantage of blacks.

The Price of Ghetto Housing. One consequence of this

segmentation has been the existence of markups in the price of ghetto housing. While the evidence is admittedly varied, the majority of empirical studies have found that blacks pay more for their housing than do whites.[1] In neighborhoods of comparable character, homes of comparable structural quality tend to be more expensive in black neighborhoods than in predominantly white sectors of the metropolis. These so-called ghetto premiums appear to reflect a widespread and chronic shortage of quality housing for blacks. Although there is some evidence that the size of the average markup has been reduced in recent years and that blacks may now be receiving a discount [26], in the past many urban areas have registered premiums as high as 10 or 15 percent—a differential that would have a major impact on the welfare of minority households.

The Quality of Housing Services. There is also evidence that segregation has led to marked differences in the types of dwelling units occupied by blacks and whites. Blacks at every income level tend to live in lower quality dwellings than their white counterparts [12,27]. Blacks are also less likely to own their homes [12,21]. While such findings may to a degree reflect differences in tastes, they more likely reflect systematic differences in the kinds of dwelling units that are typically available in the black and white sectors of the housing market. Quality housing tends to be scarce and relatively expensive in established minority neighborhoods. To the extent that black access to other parts of the metropolis is restricted, the probability of blacks occupying high-quality housing will be low.

Educational Deprivation

In the absence of direct public intervention, segregated housing invariably gives rise to segregated schools. The segregation of classrooms appears to have had a negative effect on the scholastic achievement of blacks, even when differences in family background and in the quality of teachers and schools are taken into account [5]. Segregation may also affect the quality of the school itself because black neighborhoods are considerably short-changed in the provision of public services. Residential segregation by race may then reduce the educational opportunities of blacks and perpetuate existing income and class differentials by de-

1. See references [1,3,6,8,12,13,14,15,20,24,26].

priving minority children of the chance to compete on an equal footing with white children.

Employment Opportunities

By restricting their access to suburban jobs, the concentration of blacks within the nation's cities could conceivably reduce the overall level of black employment [11]. This presumed link between segregation and unemployment has been difficult to verify empirically [16,31]. But as the share of jobs in suburban areas continues to expand, blacks may find themselves increasingly isolated from employment opportunities.

Psychological Effects

If large urban ghettos were replaced with small clusters of minority housing scattered throughout the metropolitan area, neighborhoods could remain equally segregated, but the economic impact of that segregation might be reduced. Access to better housing, schooling, and job opportunities might be achieved within the context of racially stratified neighborhoods.

But even if these economic handicaps were overcome, neighborhood segregation would still impose—on blacks and whites alike—a menace to the wholesome social psychology of the community. Segregated neighborhoods, especially when they lead to segregated schools, inhibit contact between the two races and impede the assimilation of blacks into the mainstream of American society. Although integration is occurring to an increasing extent in a variety of public places, segregation in private housing remains a major obstacle to racial mixing.

It is possible that the lack of interracial contacts in their residential environments has had a major effect on the self-perception of this country's blacks. Black children may interpret their physical isolation as a sign of an inherent inferiority to whites—an attitude which could easily affect their potential for upward mobility. Segregation may also impose its psychic burdens on whites. Those who profess a devotion to the American credo of human equality cannot escape feelings of unease or guilt when they see that some people, because of skin color rather than individual performance, are denied equitable treatment and upward mobility in the housing market.

Segregation may also induce prejudicial attitudes and

discriminatory actions among whites because it implies that society looks more favorably on the majority. Experience with integrated living has typically led to positive attitudes toward racially integrated housing [19]. The obverse of this finding is that segregation maintains and possibly generates negative racial attitudes among the white majority youth that tend to encourage and to perpetuate a racist society.

Benefits versus Costs

It cannot be denied that segregation, despite its economic and psychological costs, may have benefits for some blacks. The physical concentration of blacks sometimes increases their political power, enabling them to make community institutions more responsive to their needs. Segregation also provides a market for certain minority businesses and entrepreneurs. However, to date these potential benefits have been overshadowed by segregation's costs—costs that for the most part were imposed on the black community. As a result, the consequences of residential segregation by race are of far more concern to society at large than if the blacks had freely chosen to segregate themselves.

THE CAUSES OF SEGREGATION

The stratification of urban housing markets into racially separate neighborhoods can arise from a number of different forces, not all of which are considered bad. Segregation can reflect informational constraints or household preferences, as well as racial differences in income or discrimination against blacks in housing. Public ambivalence regarding some of these causal factors has produced considerable debate in the past, and is likely to do so in the future.

Discrimination

Much of the segregation that exists in urban areas is undoubtedly the direct result of discrimination against blacks in housing. In the not-so-distant past, racial covenants on many dwellings prevented sales to potential black buyers. Financial institutions refused to accept mortgages in racially integrated neighborhoods. The professional association of realtors maintained an explicit code of ethics that prohibited its members from introducing blacks into previously all-white areas. Federal housing policies were tilted against the creation of integrated neighborhoods. These and other overt discriminatory practices affected all phases of housing transactions, and unquestionably helped to create and preserve racially separate housing.

Recent public policies have been aimed at prohibiting these devices and discouraging discriminatory behavior. Beginning in the early 1960s, a series of federal, state, and local reforms were enacted to promote equal opportunity in housing. At the federal level, Title VIII of the 1968 Civil Rights Act barred discrimination by race, religion, and national origin in both owner-occupied and rental housing. This legislation exempted certain categories of dwellings, but these were covered within the year by a U.S. Supreme Court ruling (*Jones v. Alfred H. Mayer Co.*, 392 U.S. 409 [1968]) that prohibited all forms of discrimination against blacks in housing.

These governmental attempts to promote equal opportunity in housing, buttressed by pressure from civil rights

organizations and other citizen groups, have not removed many of the more subtle forms of discrimination within the real estate industry. Examples of redlining and racial "steering" underscore this point. Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to assume that the forces of discrimination have been reduced by recent legislation. Were segregation simply the product of discriminatory behavior, the problem might be diminishing instead of worsening. But residential segregation by race seems to reflect factors in addition to market discrimination. Most of the controversy about segregation relates to these other causal factors.

Economic Factors

A certain amount of segregation reflects the pronounced difference between the economic status of blacks and whites. In 1975, the median income of black families was 38 percent less than the median income of white families. Since households with similar incomes tend to select similar quality homes, and since dwellings tend to be clustered by size, age, and quality, economic differences *per se* could conceivably lead to some amount of residential segregation by race.

This general line of reasoning has led some analysts to liken the isolation of blacks to the isolation of earlier immigrant groups. Banfield writes:

> The other minority groups once lived in the oldest parts of the inner cities—and the Negro lives there now—not so much because they were looked down on (although, of course, they were) as because they had low incomes [2, p. 78].

A corollary to this basic analogy is the assumption that economic progress on the part of blacks will eliminate residential segregation by race—just as such gains eventually led to the assimilation of other immigrant groups.

It is difficult to dismiss such hypotheses. Economic equality for blacks might well lead to a revolution in race relations. Yet existing empirical evidence tends to invalidate any simple historical comparisons. In contrast to other immigrant groups, the segregation of blacks has not declined over time, despite significant gains in their relative incomes. The majority of blacks today appear to be more segregated than Mexican-Americans or Puerto Ricans, more recent immigrant groups that are below blacks on the socioeconomic ladder [30].

It can also be shown that racial differences in income explain only a small amount of the segregation that exists in urban areas [9,10,28,29]. The author estimated the distribution of blacks (and whites) that would arise if income were the sole determinant of a household's location, using 1970 data from 76 of the nation's largest metropolitan areas. These estimates assume that the expected number of blacks and whites in any given census tract depends only on the income distribution of the tract's residents and on the income distribution of blacks and whites in the metropolitan area as a whole. For example, if a neighborhood contained a high proportion of high-income households and if the vast majority of blacks were poor, only a small number of blacks would be expected to live in the area.

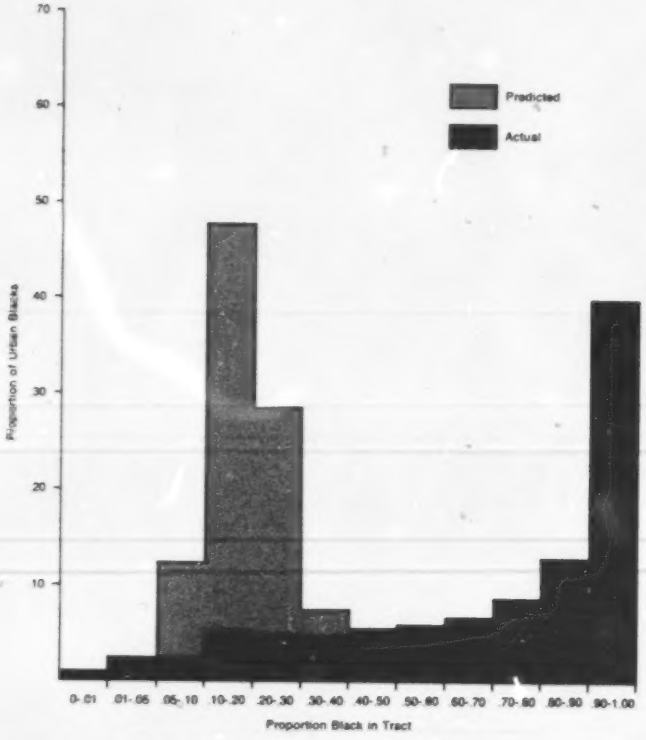
Figure 8 compares the distribution of blacks that was derived through this mapping procedure—called the "expected" distribution—to the actual distribution of blacks across census tracts with different racial mixes. Figure 9 presents equivalent statistics for the distribution of urban whites.

These figures give striking evidence that the ghettoization of this nation's blacks is not the direct consequence of their lower incomes. If income were the sole determinant of a household's location, less than 1 percent of the sample's blacks would live in census tracts where they—the blacks—constituted more than 50 percent of the total population. But instead of this expected 1 percent, 74 percent of blacks actually lived in tracts that were more than 50 percent black. Viewed from an alternative perspective, if income were the sole determinant of location, the vast majority of blacks—87 percent—would reside in census tracts where the proportion of blacks fell in the 5 to 30 percent range. In actuality, however, only 12 percent of the blacks lived in tracts with such a racial mix.

Statistics describing the distribution of whites (Figure 9) tell a similar story. Based on income alone, one would expect that hardly any whites—close to zero percent—would live in tracts where the black population was under 1 percent. Yet 64 percent of the whites were actually living in tracts where less than one out of every hundred persons was black. According to the economic criterion, 85 percent of the whites in the 76 large metropolitan areas "should have been" living in census tracts where blacks constituted 5 to 30 percent of the population. Instead, only 13 percent of the whites resided in tracts with this degree of racial mix.

Thus, appealing as it may be to blame the high degree

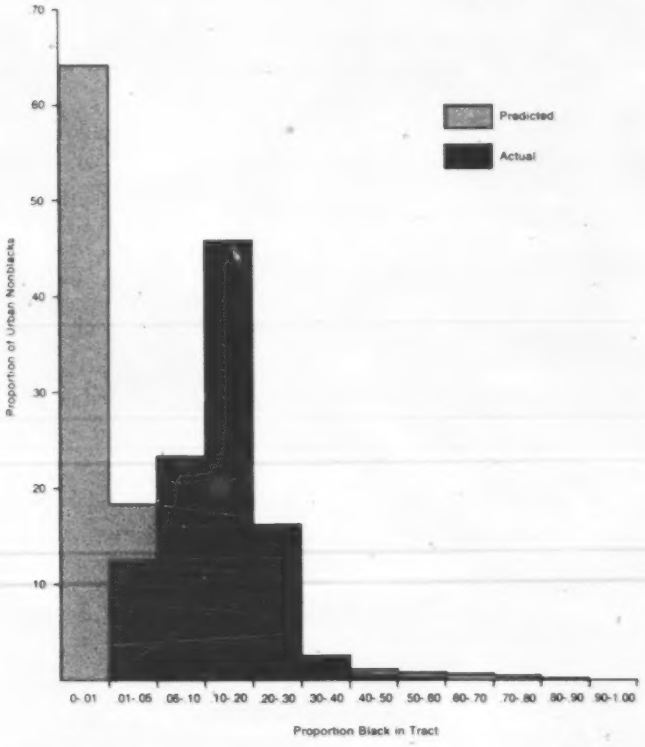
Figure 8
ACTUAL AND PREDICTED* DISTRIBUTION OF URBAN BLACKS BY PROPORTION BLACK IN TRACT: 1970 (76 SMSAS)



*The predicted distributions are based on the assumption that the expected number of blacks and whites in any given census tract depends solely on the income distribution of the tract's residents and on the income distribution of blacks and whites in the metropolitan area as a whole.

SOURCE: A. B. Schnare, "Housing in Black and White: An Analysis of Segregation in U.S. Metropolitan Areas." Contract Report 246-3. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1977).

Figure 9
ACTUAL AND PREDICTED* DISTRIBUTION OF URBAN WHITES BY PROPORTION BLACK IN TRACT: 1970 (76 SMSAS)



*The predicted distributions are based on the assumption that the expected number of blacks and whites in any given census tract depends solely on the income distribution of the tract's residents and on the income distribution of blacks and whites in the metropolitan area as a whole.

SOURCE: A. B. Schnare, "Housing in Black and White: An Analysis of Segregation in U.S. Metropolitan Areas.", Contract Report 246-3. (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1977).

of neighborhood segregation on the higher incidence of poverty among blacks, this does not square with the facts. Income differences between whites and blacks may contribute to the residential segregation patterns, but they clearly do not play the primary or major role that has been attributed to them.

Prejudicial Attitudes

A third source of segregation is the preference on the part of whites or blacks to live in racially segregated neighborhoods. Numerous theoretical models of the housing market have shown that feelings of hostility or attraction toward certain types of households in and of themselves will tend to produce a racially segregated housing market.[2] If such models are correct—and they are difficult to verify empirically—they imply that these sentiments or attitudes will inevitably insinuate themselves into the operation of the real estate market and that the end result will be a substantial amount of segregation.

It is important to stress again, as noted earlier, the distinction between attitudes and practices. Prejudicial attitudes refer to a household's desire to have—or not to have—particular kinds of neighbors. Such prejudice can exist with or without discriminatory practices within the real estate industry. While fair housing laws can reduce or eliminate the latter kind of behavior, there is no guarantee that they will affect the underlying attitudes of an area's residents. For example, if the majority of whites are unwilling to live in racially mixed neighborhoods, black entry into previously all-white neighborhoods would be likely to trigger a series of household moves that would eventually produce resegregation. The question of attitudes may be examined from both the black and white perspective.

Black Attitudes toward Integration. It is sometimes argued that urban segregation is the direct consequence of a desire among blacks to live "with their own kind." Such preferences could presumably arise from a widespread desire to preserve common family, church, and cultural ties. They could also reflect an unwillingness of blacks to confront the expected antagonism of the white community. Whatever their source, such attitudes on the part of blacks could help to maintain racially segregated housing even in the absence of institutional discrimination.

2. See references [3,17,18,22,23,24].

Contradictory findings make this self-segregation hypothesis difficult to accept or reject. On the one hand, public opinion polls have uncovered little evidence that blacks desire to live in racially segregated neighborhoods. A 1969 *Newsweek* survey found that 74 percent of the nation's blacks favored mixed over all-black neighborhoods—a figure that was up from 64 percent in 1963. Relatively few urban blacks expressed a desire to live in neighborhoods which were *mainly* white, but the great majority appeared to prefer neighborhoods in which the races were equally mixed [19].

On the other hand, similar surveys showed that a large proportion of blacks feared discrimination in the rental and sale of housing [4,7]. Those expressing the greatest skepticism about the efficacy of open housing were the young, well-educated blacks in the North—precisely the ones who might otherwise be the most willing and the most able to move into integrated neighborhoods. It is possible that this expectation of discrimination inhibits moves from all-black areas. If so, such attitudes—whether justified or not—would help to preserve residential segregation by race.

White Attitudes toward Integration. White attitudes are less ambiguous. As late as 1968, 35 percent of a national sample of whites indicated that they would move "if colored people came to live next door." When faced with the prospect of a "large number" of blacks as neighbors, 70 percent said they would leave [19]. On the positive side, these same polls have shown a dramatic decline in the number of whites who express a prejudice. Nevertheless, the existing level of white prejudice is consistent with the high degree of segregation which characterizes the majority of urban areas.

Much of this prejudice undoubtedly reflects a confusion between class and race. Blacks may be viewed as inferior neighbors because they are assumed to be lower class. Only 14 percent of a 1972 sample of whites said that they would object to a black neighbor with the same income and education. Because white resistance to blacks *in general* is considerably more intense, this most likely reflects a tendency on the part of whites to use race as a predictor of social class.

Blacks are also seen by many whites as a threat to the market value surrounding homes—a stereotype that has affected every phase of modern real estate transactions and that often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Many whites rationalize their own objections to integration on the basis of their neighbors' prejudice; they view themselves as rel-

atively unbiased, but believe the racism of other whites will induce panic selling in response to an influx of blacks.

Whatever their origin, racial stereotypes and prejudices are an integral part of the attitudes of many whites. It appears that they are present in sufficient degree to support a highly segregated housing market even in the absence of overt discrimination.

Informational Barriers

Finally, informational constraints may also help to maintain existing patterns of segregation. Households considering a change in residence typically focus their housing search on neighborhoods that are relatively close to their existing dwellings. This pattern may or may not stem from strong community ties, but it does seem to reflect the inverse relationship between distance and the household's knowledge of the housing market. Such informational constraints could be a powerful force in the preservation of segregation. Black households may confine their search to familiar locales because they are unaware of housing options elsewhere in the metropolis.

TOWARD A NEW PUBLIC POLICY FOR DEALING WITH SEGREGATION

The decade of the 1960s seemed particularly ripe for a dramatic decline in segregation. Fair housing laws were enacted at all levels of government. The relative incomes of blacks rose significantly. And blacks and whites alike grew more receptive to integrated neighborhoods. Yet urban areas showed a tendency to impose more, rather than less, segregation on black residents.

The complete returns from those years may not be in. Open housing ordinances are still in their infancy and their impact may not have been fully felt. This may be particularly so because racial patterns often date back to the earliest days of American cities and would thus be slow to change. Yet the evidence of the 1960s and early 1970s tends to dampen optimism that the new laws, even with time and patience, will suffice to bring about a desegregated housing market.

Assuming that it is not in the public interest for the nation to develop or maintain highly segregated neighborhoods, a number of issues need to be clarified as the basis for a pro-integration policy:

- How much existing segregation stems from the various causal factors that have been identified? Until recently, pursuing the question might have appeared trivial or academic. Increasingly, it takes on practical importance for weighing existing laws and fashioning new directions.
- Will persistent or better enforcement of existing fair housing laws reduce the tendency to preserve and extend segregated neighborhoods? Alternatively, would the absence of both subtle and overt discrimination in the real estate market significantly weaken the racial stratification that now exists, or are other factors sufficiently strong to preserve a segregated housing market?
- What would be the impact of segregation in the absence of overt discrimination?

- What options can or should be used to counter nondiscriminatory forces when they perpetuate segregation?

Current public policy is directed primarily at combating discrimination within the real estate industry. Equal opportunity has been the watchword. The right of individuals to choose their place of residence freely, without unfair interference on the part of landlords, realtors, or lending institutions, was proclaimed and enforced through legislative and administrative measures.

But if these laws do not suffice, is some form of affirmative action needed to spur racial integration in housing? That is, beyond insisting on equal opportunity, does government have a legitimate role to play in influencing the locational decisions of households? If so, how could government intervene in the housing market for the benefit of the general public without conflicting with what many individual citizens perceive as their right to choose their own neighbors and neighborhoods? Even if affirmative action could overcome this apparent contradiction with the freedom of choice principle, what forms could it take to become feasible and effective?

The close look at trends in urban segregation raises these difficult but compelling questions. By facing up to them, policy makers will at least be on the road toward formulating more appropriate public responses to this crucial question for members of all races.

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